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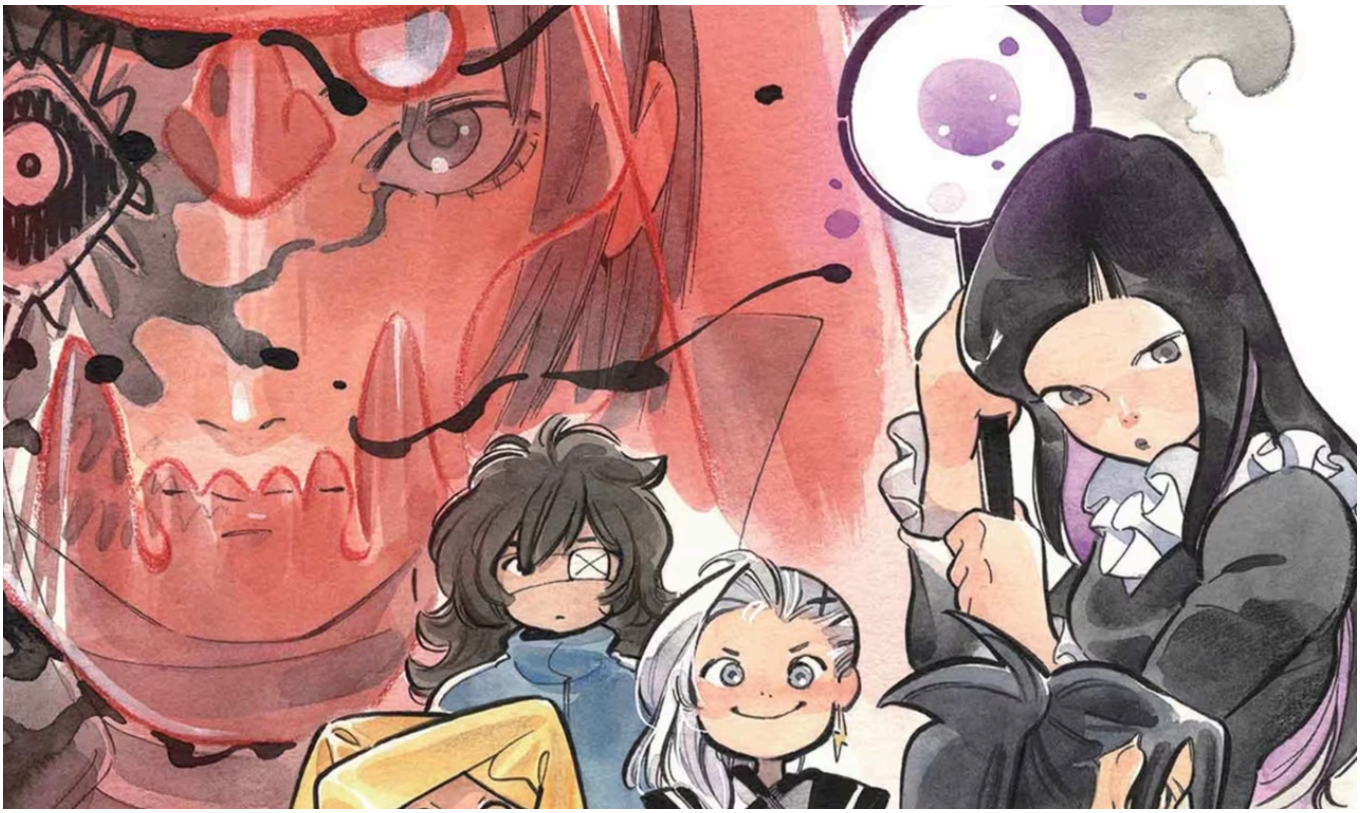
Ultimate X-Men creator Peach Momoko reflects on two years of writing and drawing Marvel's boldest X-Men reinvention

As Marvel's Ultimate Universe winds down, Peach Momoko talks Ultimate X-Men, new mutants, and her future as a writer.



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Features by Jules Chin Greene, Staff Writer

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Peach Momoko has been a powerhouse creator for Marvel Comics these past few years. And with Ultimate X-Men, a book she has been both artist *and* writer on, Momoko has been part of the success of Marvel's Ultimate Universe. Reinventing fan-favorite X-Men like Armor, Psylocke, and Akihiro, while providing new takes on characters like Shadow King and Sunfire, Ultimate X-Men depicts Marvel's Merry Mutants as you've never seen them before.

As the Ultimate Universe at Marvel winds down, I interviewed Peach Momoko about what it's been like handling both writing and art duties, as well as if she has any plans for writing more in the future.

Popverse: How do you feel about your Ultimate book and the Ultimate line ending completely despite commercial success and critical success?

Peach Momoko: I have been with the girls for two years straight. So I feel a bit lonely. But I am also very happy I was able to watch them grow and tell their own story. I knew from the start of the project to begin and end the story in 2 years, so I am happy that it is ending on a high note.

Would you return to the Ultimate line were it to ever restart, or reboot again? If so, what do you have in mind?

Maybe. But I don't have anything in mind yet. My brain can only prepare for what I have to do in front of me. And currently, I have to focus on some other projects and the Sai: Dimensional Rivals story.

Do you have a favorite character reinvention that you were involved in? I know fans really love your version of Armor.

I really love all my characters equally, so I can't really pick one. I always enjoy seeing fans' passion towards any of the characters when they show me their fan art, cosplay, or ask for a sketch of that character.

Can you talk about the development of what became your Ultimate X-Men original pitch? Was what we see the first idea, or did it go through some evolution? Tell us about that.

The original pitch was always about the mutants vs society vs cult. The first idea did not change too much. But the pacing evolved greatly. Because it was real-time and a two-year story, I really had to calculate and think of when to drop what information correctly. Even though my story was said to be a very slow burn, I didn't want a mutant battle... cult problem... etc. to happen overnight, because for me, that doesn't feel real. All these life conflicts take time from start to end (is there really an end?), so I was very careful about the pacing of the story. So the readers actually feel they are part of this entire timeline personally, and not just reading something as a "bystander."

Image credit: Marvel Comics

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What would you say to Marvel using some of the new characters you created like Maystorm and Natsu, after Ultimate X-Men ends?

I'll be happy to let them.

Do you hope to do more writing in the future?

Yes.

With your run on Ultimate X-Men, I believe this is the longest uninterrupted run a writer-artist from outside the U.S. has had at Marvel. For you, what were the challenges?

Everything was a challenge. Remembering what information I told in the past months, remembering each character's own timeline position... and sometimes it would take me a week to create a story (and rough interior art), and find out that the story doesn't make sense or drags...so I would have to scrap the entire story and start from scratch. So sometimes I had to create multiple stories before feeling good about it. Then that creates a big deadline issue. But because I do not want to be late, I just have to concentrate harder and longer to hit the monthly deadline.

> *Image credit: Marvel Comics*

And what do you feel the reward is of creating this amount of work for several years for the U.S.-based and English-language-centric Marvel Comics?

Just to make even the tiniest scratch in the history of Marvel Comics is enough of a reward to me. But for me, seeing the fans bring me the comic to sign, tell me their favorite character, cosplay, draw fan art, and talk about it amongst their peers...that is the biggest reward.

What advice would you give to other writer-artists in other countries, or for whom English isn't their first language, in working with Marvel Comics?

I think English is still very important for working in Marvel Comics. If you are like me, who can't speak English, you will need to find a helpful partner who understands your way of thought and speak for/represents you in English.

Join Popverse in our own little X-Mansion as we cover just about everything you need to know about the X-Men. Learn how Marvel's mighty mutants are classified by power, or why the Krakoan Age of comics is coming to an end. And once you're done with those, keep up with the characters' big screen outings via Popverse's X-men movie watch order.

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Jules Chin Greene: Jules Chin Greene is a journalist and Jack Kirby enthusiast. He has written about comics, video games, movies, and television for sites such as Nerdist, AIPT, and Multiverse of Color.

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